

REMARKS

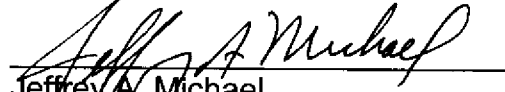
Consideration of this submission with the accompanying RCE filed in the above-identified patent application is respectfully requested.

Applicants have herein canceled claims 41-60, and have presented new claims 61 – 76 for substantive examination. The subject matter of new claims 61 – 76 is fully supported in applicants' specification and no new matter has been added by these claims.

New claims 61 – 76 are believed to be distinguishable over all of the references of record. In particular, none of the references of record disclose or teach a coupling device comprising a frame and a lever movably mounted to the frame at a mounting location, wherein the lever has a distal end that is movable relative to the frame between a first position in which the distal end of the lever covers the opening of the mouth and a second position in which the distal end of the lever does not cover the opening of the mouth, and wherein the lever defines a manipulation portion between the mounting location and the distal end that extends through and below an opening in the bottom surface of the frame when the distal end is in the first position, with the manipulation portion being responsive to a direct pushing force applied thereto to extend through the opening in the bottom surface of the frame and into the void defined between the sides of the frame when the lever moves from the first position to the second position. Accordingly, there is no basis for anticipation of applicants' claims by any of the references of record, nor is there any basis for combining any of the references of record to teach applicants' claimed invention. Applicants accordingly believe that claims 61 – 76 are in condition for allowance, and such action is solicited.

The Examiner is cordially invited to contact the undersigned by telephone to discuss any unresolved matters.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey A. Michael", is written over a horizontal line.

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